

ALABAMA'S HEALTH

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Department's Men's Health Initiatives Expand

Men's Health has an immense effect on our families, communities, and the workforce, but it is one of the most understudied and underfunded areas in public health. The lack of education and emphasis on prioritizing preventive care has led to a decline in the life expectancy of men.

In 2008, several Alabama Department of Public Health employees decided to bring this issue to light and push for change by exploring the major causes and manners of male mortality in Alabama after attending the South Central Public Health Leadership Institute. Four years later, some of those same employees and a few new faces have successfully turned those dreams into a reality.

Although this nonfunded initiative hosted two highly successful events in the past, 2012 activities would surpass all expectations. Dedicated and talented individuals from the Bureau of Professional and Support Services, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, and several other units within the department came together to form this year's Men's Health Advisory Council. The council would then be expanded after selecting an intern capable of spearheading the 2012 efforts into a statewide awareness campaign.

Chantel Hartman was selected as the program's first intern. She said, "As the first men's health intern, my goal was to not simply recognize Men's Health Month, but to use all of the resources available within ADPH to build a solid foundation for an educational and well-rounded campaign."

The County Showdown returned for a second year due to last year's overwhelming success statewide. Each area administrator was asked to select men's health representatives, who would have the task of developing men's health awareness events in counties throughout their designated area. Ms. Hartman served as the contact person for all area coordinators and provided them with men's health tool kits, which included nutrition and preventive care educational material along with men's health gear to distribute during their events. Yet again, area and county coordinators went over and beyond the



Gov. Robert Bentley proclaims Men's Health Month as Maury West, Dr. Tom Geary, Dr. Tom Miller, Chantel Hartman, Jamey Durham, Brent Hatcher, Drew Nelson and Danny Doyle look on.

call of duty by organizing several health fairs, free health screenings, and meetings with local government officials.

To commence Men's Health Month in Alabama, the ADPH Men's Health Advisory Council launched the new Men's Health webpage on the ADPH website. The webpage provides educational material and resources about the leading causes of death of men in Alabama. It also highlights awareness events and programs planned by ADPH.

On the afternoon of June 19, members of the Men's Health Advisory Council met with Gov. Robert Bentley in the Old House Chamber of the State Capitol to witness the signing of a proclamation declaring June 11 through June 17, 2012, as Men's Health Week in the state of Alabama.

Over 140 people from around the United States logged into the satellite conference and live webcast "Men's Health: The Road to High Quality Healthcare." This collaboration from the ADPH Men's Health Planning Committee and Office of Minority Health examined health issues impacting men and how they can become more proactive at leading healthier

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Charles C. Thomas Inducted into Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame

Charles C. Thomas, RPh, FAPhA, Pharmacy Division director, was among the 12 health care professionals inducted into the Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame July 28 at the RSA Activity Center in Montgomery. Thomas was recognized for his outstanding work in and advocacy for the pharmacy profession.

Prior to working for the Alabama Department of Public Health, Thomas had a 35-year career in the practice of community pharmacy and owned a local pharmacy in Huntsville. While a student at Auburn University, Thomas founded Phi Lambda Sigma, the national pharmacy leadership society. Today, the society has chapters in 98 colleges and schools of pharmacy and continues his vision of supporting leader development and recognizing leadership talent in student pharmacists and practitioners.

Thomas is a past president of the Alabama Pharmacy Association, Alabama State Board of Pharmacy and Auburn University School of Pharmacy Alumni Association. An active member of the American Pharmacists Association (APhA), he has chaired the APhA-APPM Community/Ambulatory Section, was elected Delegate to the House of Delegates, and was appointed a member of the APhA Strategic Directions Committee and APhA-PAC. Thomas is a Fellow of the American Pharmacists Association and is the 2005 recipient of the APhA-ASP Linwood F. Tice Friend of the Academy of Student Pharmacists. Phi Lambda Sigma, the national pharmacy leadership society, created the Charles Thomas Scholarship in 2011 to honor him.

Thomas actively supports, mentors and engages in student development by the rotations through ADPH that he coordinates and hosts for intern pharmacists from schools of pharmacy as well as his active participation in pharmacy programs that foster student development.

Other 2012 Healthcare Hall of Fame honorees are as follows: Rachel Z. Booth, Ph.D.; Charles W. Breaux Sr,

M.D.; Robert C. Chapman, LFACHE; William H. Coleman, M.D., Ph.D.; the late Samuel Eichold II, M.D.; Steven P. Furr, M.D.; Albert F. LoBuglio, M.D.; Judge James Allen Main; and James T. Montgomery.

The Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame was founded in 1997 to recognize those persons, living or deceased, who have made outstanding contributions to, or rendered exemplary service for, health care in Alabama. Through this recognition, the organization hopes to pass on these outstanding accomplishments to Alabama's next generation.

More information about the Hall of Fame is available at www.healthcarehof.org and on Facebook, Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame.



Dr. Joseph O. Dean, left, retired Dean, McWhorter School of Pharmacy, and member of the Hall of Fame Selection Committee, is shown with Pharmacy Division Director Charles C. Thomas.

Alabama Department of Public Health

Mission
To serve the people of Alabama by assuring conditions in which they can be healthy.

Value Statement
The purpose of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to provide caring, high quality and professional services for the improvement and protection of the public's health through disease prevention and the assurance of public health services to resident and transient populations of the state regardless of social circumstances or the ability to pay.

The Department of Public Health works closely with the community to preserve and protect the public's health and to provide caring quality services.

Alabama's Health

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Environmentalists Receive RHES/RS Credentials

Two environmentalists from Public Health Area 10 completed their certifications to become Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarians (REHS/RS) this summer. After months of research, study and online courses covering everything from air quality to vectors and zoonotic diseases Cyndi Tereszkievicz and Doug Turnbull finalized their journey by passing the four-hour REHS/RS credentialing test.

When asked, Ms. Tereszkievicz was quoted as saying, "I have never in my life taken a test that hard." Statistically speaking, only 30 percent of those who take the test achieve a passing score on the first try. Ms. Tereszkievicz and Turnbull both succeeded on their first attempt. This credential, through the National Environmental Health Association, is recognized nationally and internationally as one of the highest levels of achievement for professional environmentalists.

Both agree when they say this, "It might not mean more money or a promotion, but it will mean a lot when introduced to other professionals as a REHS from the State of Alabama."

Others in Alabama with the designation are as follows: Craig Corwin, April Pearce, Michele Sellers, Renee Sinsky,

Rachel Sullenburger of the Jefferson County Department of Health and Tim Hatch and John Hooper of the Center for Emergency Preparedness. Retiree Carl Thornton also holds the designation.



Cyndi Tereszkievicz and Doug Turnbull of Public Health Area 10 are shown with a stack of books and reference materials they used to study for the REHS/RS credentialing test.

Breastfeeding Rates Rise in Alabama and the Nation

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Breastfeeding Report Card brings together state-by-state information. The stated purpose of the report card is as follows: "It compiles many types of data so states can monitor progress, celebrate state successes, and identify opportunities to work with health professionals, employers, business owners, community partners and family members to protect, promote and support breastfeeding."

Alabama was among the 17 states having a 5 to 6 point change between 2009 and 2011. These are the state's mothers' breastfeeding percentages:

- 57.2% ever breastfed
- 29.7% were breastfeeding at 6 months
- 14.4% were breastfeeding at 12 months
- 24.8% were exclusively breastfeeding at 3 months

- 9.1% were exclusively breastfeeding at 6 months

Breastfeeding rates continue to rise, with increases of about 2 percentage points in breastfeeding initiation, and breastfeeding at 6 and 12 months. Breastfeeding initiation in mothers increased from 74.6 percent in 2008 to 76.9 percent in 2009. This improvement in initiation represents the largest annual increase over the previous decade. Breastfeeding at 6 months increased from 44.3 percent to 47.2 percent; breastfeeding at 12 months increased from 23.8 percent to 25.5 percent.

The report card can be viewed at <http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/2012BreastfeedingReportCard.pdf>. For more information, contact State Lactation Coordinator Michell Grainger, MSN, RNC, IBCLC, WIC Program, (334) 206-2921.

lifestyles. Jay Angoff, U.S Department of Health and Human Services Regional Director, Region 7, addressed how the Affordable Care Act will benefit and improve the health of males in the United States. ADPH Social Work Director Maury West gave a brief overview of the agency's previous men's health initiatives, followed by a discussion led by Ms. Hartman of the top 10 health issues affecting men in Alabama.

Angoff was also the keynote speaker of the highlight of ADPH's Men's Health Month awareness campaign. On June 21 over 100 interested people gathered at the John L. Buskey Health Sciences Center on the campus of Alabama State University. Montgomery Mayor Todd Strange opened by discussing health initiatives that city officials are working on to improve the lives of Montgomery residents. Speakers from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Jackson Clinic and the University of Alabama at Birmingham joined Angoff and Strange to discuss several health issues affecting men such as low testosterone and suicide.

Attendees were greeted by two youth groups, Kappa Knights and Sigma Club, who took time out of their summer activities to serve as hosts for the event. Registered participants were also provided with a mini men's health tool kit to help promote living a healthier lifestyle. Tool kits included My Plate diagrams, condoms, balance bands and golf tees. Attendees were also able to register for door prizes from several local businesses. ADPH's Cardiovascular Health Program and Prescription Drug Monitoring Program also generously donated door prizes.

The ADPH Men's Health awareness campaign ended with fun and fellowship. ADPH central office employees came out en masse to witness their colleagues showcase their most creative men's health message. From acting skills to

musical talents, contestants wowed the crowd as they were judged on the creativity of their message. The top three contestants earned prizes, with first place and the title of "Best in Blue" going to a rendition of "Little Boy Blue" by Chris Haag of the Bureau of Family Health Services.

"This year's activities have really contributed to our men's health efforts and we hope to continue to bring awareness to health issues affecting men." Maury West, State Social Work Director, said.

These are some highlights of the County Showdown events. Submitted events will be judged on several components and the results announced later.

Butler County Health Department set up a men's health booth at a local movie theater during the opening nights of two major movie productions.

Colbert County hosted a Men's Health and Wellness Fair with free health screenings available and advice on how to live a healthier life from a local fitness instructor and urologist.

Covington County celebrated Men's Health by placing messages on food tray liners at two local hospitals.

Health department employees in **DeKalb County** participated in a health fair at one of the largest employers in the area, set up a men's health information table in the lobby of the DeKalb County Health Department, and designated June 29 as "Best in Blue Day in DeKalb."

Escambia County hosted a men's health symposium at a hospital in Brewton for over 60 attendees. June 11 and 14 were designated as "Men's Health Promotion Games" in Brewton for the 13- to 15-year-old baseball league. Players, coaches and umpires wore blue ribbons to

show their support. Jefferson Davis Community College nursing students also provided blood pressure checks.

Monroe County Health Department spread men's health awareness by providing bulletin inserts with health messages to area churches.

On June 28, **Public Health Area 8** Health Department employees celebrated their Men's Health Day by holding an information fair at the Montgomery County Health Department.

The Public Health Area 9 administrative office enjoyed a salad bar luncheon on June 22, during which over a dozen employees enjoyed a men's health and nutrition presentation by intern Claire King. Area 9 employees also participated in "Wear Blue Day" at their respective departments.

Several counties promoted Men's Health Month by creating men's health message boards and information centers inside their county health departments along with displaying men's health messages on the electronic message boards outside of the health departments.

By Chantel Hartman



Health department employees used educational materials to promote awareness and screening events for men.

CMS Honors Alabama for Efforts to Improve Child Health

Alabama is one of four states recently honored for its leadership efforts to improve children's health care, including oral health care, by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Alabama was recognized at the Second Annual CMS Medicaid-CHIP Quality Conference in Baltimore where Medicaid Assistant Medical Director Dr. Melinda Rowe and Chris Sellers, ALL Kids Director of Data and Evaluation, accepted the award on behalf of the state.

Along with Vermont, Washington and West Virginia, Alabama was cited for the collective efforts of Medicaid and ALL Kids to encourage children to access needed health care services and to track and report on quality measures related to children's dental care.

Criteria for the award included above average performance in terms of EPSDT-eligible children receiving preventive dental services, reporting on dental quality measures, and the accuracy and quality of a database used to link children to needed dental services. The initiative is part of the CMS Oral Health Initiative which has as its goal to increase the proportion of children in Medicaid and CHIP who receive a preventive dental service by 10 percentage points by 2015.

"We greatly appreciate your dedication to serving and building capacity for measuring and reporting information toward improving health care for children in Medicaid and CHIP," said CMS Chief Quality Officer Marsha

Lillie-Blanton. "You are a valued partner in our three-part aim to improve care, improve health and through improvement, lower health care costs."

ALL Kids has provided coverage for more than 300,000 children since its inception. The various enrollment and outreach strategies employed by ALL Kids have positively affected the number of uninsured children in Alabama. Currently, Alabama enjoys a low uninsured rate of 7.2 percent for children (based on U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey of the 2008-2010 coverage period).



Chris Sellers, director of Data and Evaluation, is shown with Dr. Melinda Rowe, Medicaid Assistant Medical Director.

ADPH Scores 100 Percent on SNS/CRI Readiness Review

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Strategic National Stockpile reviews state Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) and Citizens Readiness Initiative (CRI) programs annually, and this year the department received a 100 percent score on the state review, up from a score of 91 last year.

Alabama has two CRI jurisdictions: Jefferson County and Central Alabama, and both improved their scores from last year. The Jefferson County CRI Jurisdiction received a score of 99, up from 94 last year, and the Central Alabama CRI Jurisdiction received a 95, a jump from last year's score of 86.

This exceptional achievement was made possible through the efforts of the area emergency preparedness

coordinators, Center for Emergency Preparedness staff, and other ADPH staff involved in the process who have worked diligently to improve Alabama's readiness.

Technical Assistance Reviews are designed to be a representation of state and local preparedness. Evaluation is made of state and local overall readiness to manage, distribute and dispense SNS materiel during a public health emergency. Detailed documentation of preparedness capabilities are submitted for review to verify that required plans are prepared and required training has taken place. Division of Strategic National Stockpile Program Consultant Natalie Sanchez commented that in meeting state and local staff and planning partners during reviews, "It is very apparent that good work is accomplished in the state of Alabama."

ACDRS Helps Identify Risks to Prevent Childhood Tragedies

The death of any child is a tragedy, not only for the child's family but for all of us. To prevent future cases of unexpected and unexplained child deaths, an act creating the Alabama Child Death Review System, or ACDRS, was signed into law on September 11, 1997. Under this law, local and state teams review child deaths in order to fulfill the mission of the ACDRS which is "to understand how and why children die in Alabama, in order to prevent future child deaths."

Over time, these reviews have helped identify risks and trends which serve to inform efforts to prevent similar tragedies from happening to other children, families and communities.

ACDRS has been involved in several prominent statewide prevention efforts in its first 15 years of existence. Child death review findings have influenced the introduction and passage of several child injury and fatality prevention laws over the years. These include the following:

- The Secret Safe Place for Newborns
- Child Passenger Restraint, Booster Seat and Graduated Driver License laws
- The Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation (SUIDI) law, which passed just last year

ACDRS data published in the first annual report revealed that in 1998 and 1999, approximately 500 infant/child deaths per year met criteria for case review. The latest annual report indicates the number of such deaths has decreased by approximately 40 percent since then.

While the Alabama Department of Public Health has recently concentrated on improving data collection and analysis, it has also participated in multiple outreach, awareness and education campaigns related to vehicular safety and safe infant sleep. Local teams have also gone beyond the review process alone, implementing local prevention strategies as well as efforts to improve collaboration among the local agencies involved.

Several challenges remain and there is still much work to be done in the following areas.

- Vehicular deaths still account for far more preventable child deaths in Alabama than any other category, and Alabama is cited as having the second-highest teen driver fatality rate in the nation.

- In spite of progress in that regard, child passenger restraint and graduated driver's license laws could still be strengthened to comply with federal guidelines, and all-terrain vehicles remain wholly unregulated in Alabama regardless of the driver's age.
- Despite the clear evidence and strong recommendations regarding safe infant sleeping environments, infant sleep-related deaths continue to be the second-leading cause of preventable child deaths in Alabama.
- For other categories, particularly fire, poisoning and drowning deaths, public awareness and understanding of the risks and basic prevention measures remains a challenge.
- Perhaps the most challenging of all, Alabama is still faced with child deaths that are not only preventable but also intentional – cases of child abuse and neglect, homicides, and, sadly, youth suicides.

The ACDRS could not exist or operate without the diligent work of state and local teams which continue to use what we learn to try to protect Alabama's children from preventable injuries and fatalities. Those involved with ACDRS at every level remain committed to the mission.

For additional information, visit adph.org/cdr/.



Child Death Review Division Director Richard Burleson presents a certificate to (left to right) Beverly Cox, Mary Murphy and Chanell Daniels of the Jefferson County Local Child Death Review Team. Assistant Director Aretha Bracy is shown at the lectern. Certificates went to local child death review teams with a 100 percent completion rate of reviews of qualifying cases.

FIGHT THE BITE - Reduce Your Exposure to Mosquitoes

Why do we need to reduce mosquito exposure?

- Mosquitoes carry and transmit several diseases that infect humans and animals, like birds and horses.
- In Alabama, mosquitoes transmit arboviral diseases including West Nile Virus (WNV) fever and encephalitis, Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE), St. Louis encephalitis (SLE) and LaCrosse encephalitis (LAC).
- Rarely, mosquitoes can transmit malaria, dengue and yellow fever in Alabama.
- Mosquitoes do not transmit AIDS/HIV, leukemia or hepatitis.

What are the ways to reduce exposure?

- Stay indoors, especially during the dusk and dawn hours, when mosquitoes are most active.
- If you go out during the dusk and dawn hours, wear light-colored, tightly woven, loose clothing and insect repellent.
- Wear enough insect repellent to cover skin and clothes that contain one of the following EPA registered ingredients: DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus/ PMD or IR3535:
 - o Contact your health care provider with concerns about repellents.
 - o Do not use repellents under clothing.
 - o Never use repellents over cuts, wounds or irritated skin.
 - o Spray repellent on hands first and then apply it on children and faces. Do not apply to eyes, mouth and apply sparingly around ears.
 - o After returning indoors, wash treated skin and clothes with soap and water.
- Keep window and door screens shut and in good condition. Repair holes.

- Inspect your yard for places a mosquito could use to breed. Eliminate breeding sites.
 - o Dispose of containers that collect water, like buckets, cans, bottles and jars.
 - o Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets, unclog drains and gutters.
 - o Empty and scrub birdbaths, pet bowls and animal troughs to get rid of mosquito eggs.
 - o Dispose of unused tires. Overturn or store wheelbarrows, tubs and wading pools under cover when not in use.
 - o Keep weeds, vines and grass trimmed.
 - o Fill tree holes with sand or mortar.
 - o Change water in flower vases and pots twice weekly.

Where can I find more information?

- Go to cdc.gov and type Arboviral in SEARCH box.



Protective measures are key in preventing the transmission of mosquito-borne viruses. State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson and Montgomery Mayor Todd Strange held a news conference by satellite Sept. 4 to emphasize the critical importance of following these recommendations.

Alabama Cancer Facts & Figures 2011 Available Online

Alabama Cancer Facts & Figures 2011, a 48-page report produced by the Alabama Statewide Cancer Registry in collaboration with the American Cancer Society, is available at adph.org/cancer_registry.

The ninth edition of this valuable resource focuses on cancers in women.

It highlights the work of the Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program and its efforts to provide access to screening and treatment to underserved women in Alabama.

The Alabama Statewide Cancer Registry is a statewide, population-

based cancer registry which collects data on all cancer cases diagnosed or treated in Alabama. Alabama has achieved the highest standards of the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries since data year 2004. The association sets standards for completeness, timeliness and data quality.

Commendations

If you would like to praise employees for their accomplishments, send letters of commendation to the State Health Officer or the employee's supervisor and a copy by e-mail to arrol.sheehan@adph.state.al.us for inclusion in this list. Four items are needed: the employee's name, work unit, name of the person making the commendation, and his or her city and state.

Glenda Adams

Center for Health Statistics
from Rodney J. Scott
Kingston Springs, Tenn.

Tonya Blankenship

Kimberly Hancock
Debbie Wetzel
Bureau of Health Provider Standards
Jim Free
Office of Facilities Management
from St. Vincent's St. Clair Hospital
Pell City, Ala.

Linda Bolding

Center for Health Statistics
from Judy Bush
Tuscaloosa, Ala.
Eric and Flo Ficdor
Brentwood, Tenn.
Linda Patterson
Newark, N.J.

George Buckley

Bureau of Clinical Laboratories
from Jeannine Parker
Montgomery Ala.

James Coley

Adam Thomas
Bureau of Information Technology
from Tim Hatch
Center for Emergency
Preparedness

Evelyn Franklin

Bureau of Clinical Laboratories
from Jeannine Parker
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Bradley Grinstead

Office of Radiation Control
from Cecil D. Knight, Jr., M.S.P.H.
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Casandra Henderson

Center for Health Statistics
from Deborah Jean Wilkerson
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Nicole Henderson

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Office of Radiation Control
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Office of Radiation Control
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LaShondra Lewis

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Montgomery, Ala.

Kathie Peters

Center for Health Statistics
from Jeanette McCarthy
Sherrill, Iowa
Robyn Shorter
Summerdale, Ala.

Twila Pigg

Center for Health Statistics
from Lyndal Daniel
Trenton, Ga.
Cece Hylton
Mobile, Ala.

Terra Tuck

Center for Health Statistics
from Denise Fisher
Cleveland, Ohio

Retirees

June

John McKissic
Public Health Area VIII

July

Jane Duke
Bureau of Clinical Laboratories
Tracy Graham
Bureau of Clinical Laboratories
Lynn Naile

Bureau of Home
and Community Services
Pamela Reid

Public Health Area VI
Barbara Sanders
Colbert County Health Department

August

Mariam Pack
DeKalb County Health Department
Robert Smith
Limestone County
Health Department
Sheila Underwood

Bureau of Health Provider Standards
Barbara Woods
Crenshaw County
Health Department
Rachel Yancy
Public Health Area V

September

Brenda Bearden
Colbert County Health Department
Barbara Little
Bureau of Health Provider Standards



Jeanette Whaley, office manager of the Randolph County Health Department, was honored by her coworkers with a reception in her honor. She retired Aug. 1 after 36 years of service. She is shown with Mark Johnson, assistant administrator of Public Health Areas 5 and 6.

Environmental Services Q and A: Home-based Kitchen

QUESTION: I am trying to find information about starting a home-based cupcake business and trying to find out if I would need a commercial kitchen to do this. And if so, what does that consist of?

ANSWER: Under the Food Code, the rules that govern the sale of food in our state, preparing and selling food from your home is not permissible. You would need to have a permitted facility separate from your private home to operate. If you are interested in starting a food business, the best course of action is to contact a county environmentalist at the local county health department where you plan to operate and consult with him or her concerning your intentions. Information on starting a food business is available at adph.org/foodsafety/.



Elaine L. Reaves, R.N., retired from the Monroe County Health Department as the Public Health Area 9 Immunization Division nurse coordinator. She retired after 33 years of dedicated service. Ricky Elliott, PHA 9 administrator, presents her with a retirement certificate at a reception on Sept. 12.

Baby Boomers: Be Sure to Be Tested for Hepatitis C

The Alabama Department of Public Health joins the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in recommending that all Americans born between 1945 and 1965 get a one-time test for hepatitis C.

“Many of the people with hepatitis C in Alabama are not aware they have it, and its prevalence among baby boomers is five times greater than in other adults,” Dr. Mary McIntyre, assistant state health officer for disease control and prevention, said. “A simple blood test will detect the virus.”

Before widespread testing of blood donations began in 1992, hepatitis C could be spread through blood transfusions. Many infected people, however, do not report a known exposure risk.

About 3 percent of baby boomers are infected with hepatitis C. People who have not been screened should get the blood test during their next visit to the doctor, said Dr. Thomas Frieden, CDC’s director.

Hepatitis C symptoms can take decades to emerge. The virus, which can gradually scar the liver and lead to cirrhosis or liver cancer, is the leading cause of liver transplants.

Today hepatitis C is commonly transmitted by sharing needles to inject drugs. Some experts suggest that in some cases hepatitis C could have spread through routes including shared razors and toothbrushes, manicures or sniffed cocaine.

Testing baby boomers can help avert major increases of liver disease and deaths--especially since new drug therapies can cure many more people than older therapies. Deaths from hepatitis C-related diseases have almost doubled from 1999 to 2007 and now amount to more than 15,000 U.S. deaths annually.

Concerned patients should talk to their health care provider about conducting a simple blood test to determine if they have ever been infected.

More information is available at adph.org/hepatitis/ and cdc.gov/hepatitis/.



Environmental Services Offers Timely Tailgating Tips

Tailgating season offers a lot of opportunities for outdoor fun with family and friends. Being in the South, these warm weather events also present opportunities for foodborne bacteria to thrive. As food heats up in warm weather temperatures, bacteria multiply rapidly.

To protect yourself, your family and friends from foodborne illness during warm-weather months, safe food handling when eating outdoors is critical. Read on for simple answers to your food safety questions for transporting your food to your favorite tailgating site, and preparing and serving it safely once you've arrived.

Pack and Transport Food Safely:

Q. What is the best way to safely transport food to a tailgating event?

A. Keep cold foods cold. Place cold foods in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Cold food should be stored at 41 degrees F or below to prevent bacterial growth. Meat, poultry and seafood may be packed while still frozen so that they stay colder longer.

Q. What are some safe ways to keep our food cold when it's 90 degrees or plus on game day?

A. Keep coolers closed. Once at the tailgating site, limit the number of times the cooler is opened as much as you can. This helps to keep the contents cold longer. Consider packing beverages in one cooler and perishable food in another, that way, as tailgaters open and reopen the beverage cooler to replenish their drinks, the perishable foods won't be exposed to warm outdoor air temperatures. Replenish ice as needed.

Q. Can I use the same cooler for my raw meats and my potato salad?

A. Don't cross-contaminate. Be sure to keep raw meat, poultry and seafood securely wrapped or use separate coolers. This keeps their raw juices

from contaminating prepared/ready-to-eat foods or foods that will be eaten raw, such as fruits and vegetables.

Preparation:

Q. What should I do first to ensure a safe tailgating event once we arrive at our destination?

A. Food safety begins with proper hand cleaning — including outdoor settings. Before you begin setting out your tailgating feast, make sure hands and surfaces including utensils and platters are clean.

Q. What if there is not a hand sink close by?

A. If you don't have access to running water, simply use a water jug, some soap, and paper towels or pre-moistened wipes. Handwashing is vital when preparing food.

Q. Is it okay to marinate my meat outside?

A. Marinate safely. Marinate foods at the recommended cold holding temperature of 41 degrees F or below - never on the kitchen counter or outdoors. In addition, if you plan to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion separately before adding the raw meat, poultry or seafood. Don't reuse marinade.

Q. How can I tell when my meat or poultry is "done"?

A. Cook food thoroughly. When it's time to cook the food, have your clean and sanitized food thermometer ready. Always use it to be sure your food is cooked thoroughly. When cooking meat, check the temperature of the thickest part, and avoid the bone, fat and gristle. Be sure to clean the thermometer after each use. The minimum temperature guidelines for cooking safe food are as follows: Poultry 165 degrees F, ground hamburger 155 degrees F, beef or pork steaks and seafood 145 degrees F.

Serving Tailgate Food: Keep it COLD/HOT

Q. How can I keep my food safe after its cooked?

A. First, don't reuse platters or utensils. Using the same platter or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry or seafood allows bacteria from the raw food's juices to spread to the cooked food. Instead, have a clean platter and utensils ready at grill-side to serve your food.

Second, keep "ready" food hot. Grilled food can be kept hot until served by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals. This keeps it hot but prevents overcooking. The safe hot holding temperature is 135 degrees F or above.

Q. How long can my food remain out and still be considered safe?

A. Keeping food at proper temperatures - indoors and out - is critical in preventing the growth of foodborne bacteria. Once you've served your tailgating feast, the key is to never let your tailgating food remain in the "Danger Zone" - between 41 degrees F and 135 degrees F - for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if outdoor temperatures are above 90 degrees. This is when bacteria in food can multiply rapidly and lead to foodborne illness.

Q. What should I do with food that has been in the danger zone more than two hours?

A. Discard it. It is not worth taking a chance with foodborne illness. "When in Doubt - Throw it Out."

During warm weather, it is especially important to take extra precautions and practice safe food handling when preparing perishable foods, especially outdoors. Keep your "home team" healthy by following the "Safe Food - Game Plan" and score big with the fans!

HAPPY TAILGATING!

Submitted by Phyllis Fenn

Increase in Pipe Tobacco and Cigar Consumption is on the Rise Despite Decreased Cigarette Use

A new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Consumption of Cigarettes and Combustible Tobacco - United States, 2000-2011," shows that despite a continuing decline in cigarette use, there has recently been a drastic increase in adult consumption of pipe tobacco (used for roll-your-own cigarettes) and cigarette-like cigars.

The report also revealed that while total consumption of all smoked tobacco products declined by 27.5 percent between 2000 and 2011, pipe tobacco and large cigar consumption increased by 482 percent and 233 percent, respectively.

Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer, said, "This trend is very concerning because it has the potential to dismantle the gains made over the past years in lowering the rate of smoking, our nation's most preventable cause of death and disease."

The increase in these combustible forms of tobacco is directly related to their lower cost. Cigar use increased primarily due to tobacco manufacturers adding weight to many small cigars so they can be classified as large cigars. A large cigar is taxed differently from a cigarette which gives a cigar a lower overall sales price.

"In Alabama, we are seeing more interest in little cigars, which look almost exactly like cigarettes, but are wrapped in paper which contains tobacco," said Alabama Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch Director Diane Beeson. "Little cigars come in a variety of candy flavors, while candy flavored cigarettes are banned by the 2009 Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act."

"The rise in cigar smoking, which other studies show is a growing problem among youth and young adults, is cause for alarm," said Tim McAfee, director of CDC's Office on Smoking and Health. "The Surgeon General's

Report released this past March shows that getting young people to either quit smoking or never start smoking is the key to ending the tobacco epidemic, because 99 percent of all smokers start before they're 26 years old."

Smoking causes cancer in the lungs, bladder, cervix, esophagus, kidneys, larynx, mouth, pancreas, stomach and throat. From 2000-2009, more people in Alabama died of cancer of the lung and bronchus (30,592) than any other cancer site.

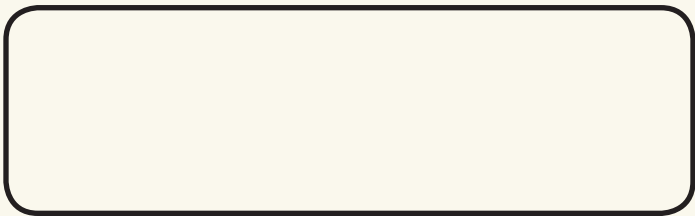
According to The Burden of Tobacco in Alabama, a report published in 2011 by the University of Alabama Institute of Social Science Research, 7,896 adults died of smoking-related causes in 2009. The national Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids reports that 174,000 Alabamians under the age of 18 will ultimately die prematurely from smoking with 10,000 becoming new smokers each year.

Increasing prices of tobacco products has been one of the most effective ways to reduce tobacco use and prevent youth smoking initiation, according to the CDC.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration also released a report recently which shows that Alabama has continued to meet its goals of curtailing sales of tobacco to underage youth (those under 18). To further reduce tobacco use among youth and young adults, the 2012 Surgeon General's Report recommends making tobacco products less affordable, running hard-hitting mass media campaigns and adequately funding evidence-based tobacco control and prevention programs.

The Alabama Comprehensive Cancer Control Program currently partners with the Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch to prevent youth smoking initiation statewide by offering free services to Alabama residents. If you or a loved one need assistance with quitting tobacco, go to AlabamaQuitNow.com or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669).





Help Identify 'No Idling Signs' at Alabama Schools

Have you seen any green "No Idling" signs at schools in Alabama? These metal signs state, "Young Lungs Need Clean Air," and advise bus and passenger vehicle drivers to turn off their engines while waiting in car pool lanes and in other areas around schools.

Asthma Program Evaluator Dr. Debra Hodges is requesting the assistance

of Health Department employees in taking photographs of these signs posted at schools throughout the state to be used in a collage. Photos may be made by cell phone, digital camera or still camera.

"This campaign is designed to lower vehicle emissions for children with asthma and compromised lung function," Dr. Hodges said. "Not only

does this simple action create better air quality for all, it saves a bundle in gasoline."

Please send photographs with the name of the school and its county to Debra Hodges, Ph.D., Injury Prevention Branch, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, 201 Monroe St., Suite 900, Montgomery, Ala. 36104, or email them to debra.hodges@adph.state.al.us.

Calendar of Events



September 24

Vaccine Billing Inservice for ADPH Clinics, 3-4 p.m.

For more information contact Winkler Sims, (334) 206-2052.



September 25

Smoking Cessation Protocol for ADPH Plan First Care Coordinators, 1-2 p.m.

For more information contact Annie Vosel, (334) 206-2959.



September 28

Caring for Patients with Cancer in Home Care, 10 a.m.-noon.

For more information contact Becky Leavins, (334) 393-5528.

September 29

National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Locations can be viewed at http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html



October 3

ADPH Emergency Operations Procedures, 10-11:30 a.m.

For more information contact Jora White, (334) 206-3807.



October 4

ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting, 3-4 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



October 10

Providing Oral Care in Home Care, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Becky Leavins, (334) 393-5528, or Shirley Offutt, (334) 206-2481.



October 11

Child Physical Abuse, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



October 17

Infection Control for ADPH Nurses, 8-10 a.m.

For more information contact Thresa Dix, (334) 206-3377.



October 17

The Impact of Financial Exploitation on the Health Care of Seniors, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Elana Parker Merriweather, (334) 206-7980.



October 29

Bridging the Great Divide, 2:30-4 p.m.

For more information contact Sandy Powell, (334) 206-5050.



November 7

Diabetes, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Debra Griffin, (334) 206-2066.